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## A YEAR'S MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT.

THE *Proceedings of the First Conference for Good City Government*, published in 1894, contained a bibliography of the literature of municipal government and its betterment. Thirty-nine pages sufficed for this purpose. The first number of *Municipal Affairs*, published in March, 1897, contained a similar bibliography, which required 224 pages. A new edition is in process of preparation, and its editor advises me that upward of five hundred pages will be required to accommodate the references.

The Philadelphia Proceedings also contained a brief account of the then existing municipal reform organizations in the country. Forty-five were described. This year the National Municipal League has 119 organizations on its roll of affiliated members, and its records show a grand total of 465 devoting all or a part of their time to the study of the municipal problem.

These figures tell their own story. They tell more directly and forcibly than a hundred pages of manuscript of the phenomenal growth of interest in municipal affairs within the past decade.

When we review the shortcomings of a year, we feel as if the situation were indeed grave; and so in truth it is. The official recognition and protection of vice and immorality in many of our large cities; the utilization of public power and office to serve private ends; the prevalence of official blackmail; the prostitution of public offices, and contracts to serve mean and selfish party and factional ends; the sinister influence of corrupt corporations, present a picture at once dark and forbidding, and constitute a problem of serious import and difficulty.

The situation, however, is by no means hopeless. For every year brings a keener appreciation of its gravity. Every year brings new forces into the field to combat the forces of evil. Every year witnesses a development of public sentiment in the direction of higher municipal standards, and advances along definite lines. Widespread corruption and political degeneracy

cannot long prevail in the face of widespread investigation and discussion and efforts at improvement. If organizations like the National Municipal League serve no other function, they at least show that, serious as the present municipal problem is, the outlook is full of hope and promise.

One great difficulty with municipal reformers in the past as well as in the present has been a too great desire to get ahead and to introduce the political millennium without adequate political preparation. In other words, they have failed to appreciate and realize, even if they may recognize it, that political instincts and institutions are of necessarily slow growth. People do not change their political habits in a day. When we appreciate how difficult it is to secure agreement among a few, is it any wonder that we experience difficulty in influencing the minds and actions of tens and hundreds of thousands? And yet this is what we must do if we are to secure permanent municipal reform.

The recent experience of New Orleans illustrates the point in question. In 1896 the burden of the "ring" had become intolerable. The voters, under the leadership of a public-spirited Citizens' League, founded on those principles for which the National Municipal League stands, won an overwhelming victory. They drove the rascals from power, sent a number of them to jail, and elected honorable, honest, and capable men to succeed them. Forthwith reforms far in advance of the public sentiment were inaugurated, and the usual results followed. The voters grew tired of maintaining so exalted a standard, and a reaction set in. They had not been trained to persistent effort. The experience, however, has, on the whole, been beneficial rather than the reverse, and the people of New Orleans, having had one taste of decency, will not rest content under machine rule. Gradually a permanent sentiment for better government will be formed in the face of adverse conditions, which will last longer than if formed in the heat of a single campaign.

The persistency of the organized effort for municipal betterment is an equally encouraging factor. Many of the organizations that were at work in 1894 at the time of the Philadelphia conference, or were formed shortly thereafter, are still at work,

with no sign of abandoning their efforts. The City Club of New York, the Municipal Leagues of Philadelphia and Milwaukee, the Civic Federation of Chicago, the Merchants' Association of San Francisco, the Reform League of Baltimore, the various civil-service-reform bodies, have done more than maintained an existence. They have increased in power, efficiency, and influence. Spasmodic efforts at reform have given way to regular and systematic endeavors. Of course, greater difficulty is of necessity encountered in the maintenance of such organizations, because they can only appeal to the unselfish civic patriotism of the citizen; while the "machines" and "rings" can and do appeal to the weaker side of ambitious, selfish, and designing men. That reform bodies can and do maintain their existence and extend their influence from year to year shows conclusively that civic spirit is growing in extent and wisdom.

In three states charter reform has occupied a prominent and conspicuous place during the past two years. California, Minnesota, and Wisconsin easily occupy the first place in this matter. San Francisco's new charter went into effect January 1, 1900, under the auspices of an administration that had been largely responsible for its adoption and was friendly to its proper enforcement. The results thus far have been satisfactory to the friends of municipal reform, including the Merchants' Association of the city, which, with Mayor Phelan, shares the responsibility and credit for its adoption and inauguration. Of course, there have not been wanting those who feel disappointed because the millennium is yet in the future and because there have been some mistakes made. These mistakes have been lessons for the wise administrator, and should not be permitted to obscure the predominating excellent features of the charter and of its administration.

The experience of San Francisco has been such as to encourage other California cities to take steps to secure newer and more modern charters. Under the constitution and the laws of the state a board of freeholders, fifteen in number, can be appointed charged with the duty of drafting a charter, submitting it first to the voters and then to the legislature. This system constitutes

an imperfect system of home rule. The people can protect themselves against the enactment of an inadequate or pernicious charter, but they cannot make sure of having their affirmative desires carried out.

The San Francisco charter, while perhaps not entitled to be classed as a model, is an advanced piece of work, and represents careful thought and study of the situation and an intelligent comprehension of the problems confronting modern cities. Its influence has been for good, and the movement for improved charters in California has been materially helped and strengthened by its example.

In Minnesota a recently adopted constitutional amendment permits the framing of home-rule charters.

Under this and the enabling acts passed by the legislature, the local courts are authorized to appoint upon petition a commission to draft and submit a charter at a special election. A four-sevenths vote is necessary for adoption. Minneapolis has twice availed itself of this opportunity, and twice failed. The second proposed charter, which was regarded as a much better instrument, was submitted to the voters in November and was defeated. St. Paul has adopted a new charter, which, while it represents an improvement, is signally defective in that it contains no civil-service provisions. The reform bodies of the city supported it, however, with great vigor because of the other substantial and important changes which it did contain. Duluth has also adopted a new charter, and numerous other cities in the state are considering the question.

The whole movement has been a healthy and a hopeful one, and augurs well for the future. An analysis of the new instruments is out of the question in this connection. It can be said, however, that they represent advances along many lines, and that a larger measure of good government is now possible than formerly. That they represent an improvement and a certain amount of antagonism to corrupt methods is clearly demonstrated by the vigorous opposition of vested political interests to which they were subjected.

In Wisconsin the League of Municipalities and the Milwaukee

Municipal Association have continued an intelligent interest in the whole subject of municipal improvement. I know of no state where the prospect is more hopeful. Chosen officials of the cities show an intelligent and generous disposition to coöperate with public-spirited citizens, and there exists, I believe, a condition of affairs fruitful of great good to the community.

In Iowa the late legislature authorized the appointment of a municipal-code commission. In Wilmington, Del., the board of trade has continued without abatement its efforts for a new charter. The city solicitors of the Pennsylvania third-class cities have prepared a new act to improve the present system in vogue among them. In Spokane, Wash., a movement for a new charter is contemplated. Mobile, Ala., has succeeded in securing a new one. Portland, Me., will shortly pass upon a charter prepared by an aldermanic commission.

The past year has witnessed the practical application of a new charter in Baltimore. This has been attended by a considerable reduction in the rate of taxation (from \$2 to \$1.67 per \$100 of assessed value) and by the reorganization of nearly all branches of the city government. In the fire department, the police force, and the public schools the merit system has been, to a greater or less extent, introduced. Nonpartisan boards have been placed in charge of the schools, charities, and some other branches of the municipal administration, and a very commendable spirit of economy has been shown by the city council and board of estimates. It is not yet quite clear to outsiders what should be thought of Mayor Hayes. Some of his appointments—indeed, we may fairly say the bulk of them—have apparently been satisfactory to the local friends of good government, but a few have been severely censured, and he seems to have behaved occasionally in an erratic and arbitrary manner. There seems to be some ground for these complaints, but the general opinion among those best qualified to judge is that Mayor Hayes has done much more than was done by any previous mayor to place the municipal administration on a nonpartisan, business basis, and has fully justified the support accorded him by independent voters at the first election under the new charter. The charter

has shown itself a valuable safeguard against extravagance and corruption. The experience of the past year in Baltimore has been, on the whole, decidedly encouraging to reformers.

In Greater New York a charter commission, appointed by Governor Roosevelt, is at work devising ways and means to correct the defects and evils of the charter of 1897. That instrument was necessarily somewhat of an experiment along certain lines, and only a very few years have been needed to develop its weak points.

There has been no serious setback during the past year for the cause of municipal civil-service reform except in New Orleans. There the excellent law of 1896 has been subjected to a process of emasculation by the machine and the system reduced to that of Philadelphia. That is to say, certain of the elective officials who are also appointing officers have been constituted the civil-service board, with power to make rules and regulations. The result will be what it has been in Philadelphia—a travesty on civil-service reform. In the latter city during the present administration the mayor's choices, selected and announced, in some cases, months beforehand, have been passed with averages of 100. All that can be said of the Philadelphia and New Orleans system is that it keeps out the very worst applicants. It does not represent any substantial barrier to an unscrupulous official or machine. The constitutionality of the New Orleans changes has, however, been questioned and is now pending in the courts.

In Chicago the politicians have been foiled in their attempts to throttle and eliminate the merit system. The Democratic party a year ago specifically declared against it and lost the election. Within six months it changed its attitude, and the enforcement of the law has been placed in the hands of a friendly commission. The constitutionality and popularity of the system established, it begins to look as if it had become a fixture.

In New York the Roosevelt act is justly regarded as a long step in advance and by far the most satisfactory piece of legislation on the subject thus far enacted. In New York city as in Chicago it looks as if civil-service reform had come to stay.

Future contests are much more likely to be waged for its extension rather than for its safety.

The civil-service provisions of the San Francisco charter are said by Dr. Albert Shaw to be "the most advanced of any modern municipal instrument." Mayor Phelan has shown his friendship for the merit system by appointing a friendly commission, with J. Richard Freud, of the Merchants' Association, as chairman. Three suits instituted to test the constitutionality of the civil-service article have been decided in its favor.

While not wholly agreeing with those who maintain that civil-service reform is the "only cure for our much-lamented municipal ills," I do believe that there can be no complete transformation of our municipal politics until the offices are removed from the reach of spoilsmen. The establishment of the merit system in our cities is essential to the betterment of our city governments, and all efforts directed toward the establishment of a sound public opinion on this subject are to be encouraged. Our numerous civil-service reform associations scattered through the country are therefore to be encouraged, as are also the women's auxiliaries; but we must be careful to guard against the view that there is but one panacea for our ills. I think we shall find that we shall have a municipal problem on our hands even after the merit system has been generally inaugurated.

For instance, are not just, equitable election laws fundamentally essential?

Can any community long retain a democratic form of government, even though the most approved and most stringent civil-service regulations may be in force, if the election laws connive at and protect frauds, and are so arranged as to enable corrupt men to maintain their creatures in office? Ballot and electoral reforms form paramount issues in certain states at this time. In Pennsylvania a Union Committee, representing the Ballot Reform Association, the Civil Service Reform Association, and the Municipal League, has been formed to promote the cause of electoral reform in the state. The politics of Pennsylvania have achieved and retained their unpleasant and unfortunate notoriety largely through the existence of a set of laws



that make frauds at election easy of accomplishment and difficult of detection ; which facilitate the election of machine men and discriminate against the honest independent. Until Pennsylvania has fair and adequate election laws it is almost useless to talk of other reforms. The present prospect favors the enactment of a law that will place all voters and all candidates on a parity, and the adoption of a constitutional amendment and laws which will make personal registration possible and will introduce other much-needed regulations and safeguards.

The Municipal League of Philadelphia for years has been laboring to bring about these reforms, and the present bright outlook is undoubtedly in very considerable part due to its persistence. In 1897 the constitutional amendment was prepared by one of its committee and presented to the legislature by its counsel. It failed of passage at that session, but in 1899 was again introduced, and this time passed, only to meet with the governor's veto. The league questioned his right to take this action and instituted a suit to determine the scope of his authority. The lower court decided against the league's contention ; but the supreme court sustained every one of its points and denied the right of a governor to prevent the people from passing on proposals to amend the constitution which have had the sanction of the legislature. The amendment must pass another legislature before it can be finally submitted to a vote of the people.

The league's victory has been considered by the leading papers of the state, not identified with the machine, as one of the most notable reform victories achieved in the state.

The plight of Kentucky under its present election law is well known. The reform forces of that state have laid aside every other consideration and measure, and concentrated their energies to secure "a fair election law." A nonpartisan committee has been formed, which has been conducting a vigorous campaign for the repeal of the infamous Goebel law and the enactment of a statute which will safeguard the liberties of the state.

The existence of a law which makes it possible to throw out the entire vote of a large and influential city like Louisville is a menace to free government. Until it is repealed, public activities

are of necessity paralyzed and every privilege for which our forefathers struggled placed in jeopardy. The civic spirit of the state is very much alive, and is working as best it can against such tremendous odds to defeat a machine which has stood sponsor for so iniquitous a measure.

In Missouri another partisan statute stands in the way of healthy political activity. It was conceived in partisan spite and to promote partisan advantage, and those who have been intrusted with its enforcement have followed in the spirit of its conception. The prostitution of the offices to partisan ends is bad, is reprehensible; but it is as nothing compared with the prostitution of the instruments which freemen use to express their opinions and wishes on public affairs.

In Wisconsin the movement for electoral reform has taken a somewhat different form. Governor-elect La Follette, through a splendid effort covering a period of at least four years, has awakened the voters of the state to the urgent necessity of a reform in the methods of nominations. In essence he advocates the nomination of all candidates by the Australian ballot at what would, to all intents and purposes, be a preliminary election. Mr. La Follette's suggestions are worthy of the closest study. His suggestions are in the right direction and indicate a temporary relief; but eventually we must make the means of placing a candidate's name on the official ballot absolutely free, equal, and open. Nomination by petition, in short, is the most effective way to prevent the evils in nominations which have been so effectively portrayed and condemned by Mr. La Follette and the Republican party of the state which has embraced his views on the subject.

The machine has had a few more valuable privileges than that of controlling nominations and a straight column on the ballot. It will yield this advantage reluctantly and only after a prolonged struggle; but freedom and equality of nomination and balloting must be secured if the full measure of democratic municipal government is to be attained.

One of the great obstacles standing in the way of that separation of the consideration of the municipal affairs from state

and national politics for which this league preëminently stands has been the existence on the statute books of laws which place a premium on straight party voting and discriminate against the independent voter and candidate. A citizen fully determined to vote his convictions in this direction finds, after entering the polling booth, that the tickets and the distribution of the offices have been so arranged that it is a matter of great difficulty for him to carry out his intentions. What with the complex duties imposed upon members of the legislature, who select the United States senators, pass state laws, and determine the form and conditions of municipal governments; and the absence of municipal home rule in letter or spirit, and the existence of a partisan ballot, the reformer interested in divorcing municipal questions from state and national ones has a hard task before him. Our present form of government almost inextricably mixes our national, state, and municipal politics, and partisanship has devised a further means of perpetuating itself through establishing a straight party column and a monopoly in the matter of nominations. The election of United States senators by a direct vote of the people would eliminate national politics from our state legislatures. The establishment of municipal home rule would eliminate municipal questions from them.

The inauguration of free and equal nominations and the abolition of party columns would complete the work of separation, and the citizens of our municipalities would have, what is now denied them, an adequate opportunity to determine municipal issues from a municipal standpoint.

Municipal home rule must be established if we are to obtain local self-government. The evils of depending upon a source of authority outside of itself have rapidly multiplied. New York city furnishes a striking lesson of the dangers of such dependence. The people of that city are constantly resorting to the legislature at Albany for relief from local conditions, overlooking their ability to apply their own remedy at home. Should Senator Platt succeed in establishing a state constabulary law for New York city, it will constitute a most serious blow to the cause of municipal home rule. Consequently a feeling of

dependence has been engendered, and the voters feel that if they should make a mistake in the choice of local officials, they can be saved from the results of their folly by an appeal to the legislature.

There has been no abatement of public interest in the subject of the municipal ownership of municipal monopolies. Indeed, there seems to be a general acquiescence in the contention that each city should own all its franchises; although there is still a great diversity of opinion as to whether the city should control or operate them. There are few indeed, who are willing to maintain that a city should give away or sell for all time the right to run street railways, to furnish heat, light, water, or other municipal necessities. To advocate such a policy would be to sanction the utilization of city property for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many. There are not many who are willing to do this, so that the discussion has practically narrowed itself down to the determination whether the city shall merely control the franchise in a general way, reserving a fair rental, or whether it shall actually operate the plants directly. In considering this phase we find that the consensus of opinion seems to be in favor of the operation of water plants and the control of street-railway operations, with opinion about equally divided on the subject of lighting. One thing is perfectly sure, and that is, as a result of all this discussion concerning municipal ownership, control, and operation, there has been a material improvement in the condition which the city has been able to impose; and, secondly, the people have been more than ever interested in questions of local government. Matters pertaining to water, heat, light, and transportation come home directly to the average citizen, and any policy affecting them appeals to him as no others do.

A strike like that which recently convulsed St. Louis also serves to awaken the people to the dangers incident to the private control and operation of important municipal functions. For suffer as we may from municipal corruption and inefficiency, they seldom, if ever, reach a point where violence and bloodshed follow. Furthermore, voters are coming to realize that the

existence of rich corporations in a community dependent upon or seeking municipal favors and discharging municipal functions constitutes a serious menace. Who does not recognize the serious import of the Ramapo Water Co.'s alliance with a nefarious political combination? The united efforts of a courageous governor and a fearless comptroller and public-spirited organizations like the Merchants' Association have been needed to check its aggressive efforts.

When was the good name of Philadelphia more seriously endangered than during the successful attempts to pass the gas ordinance and the Keystone telephone ordinance, and the unsuccessful attempt to pass the notorious Schuylkill Valley water ordinance? Out of the Keystone telephone ordinance has grown one of the gravest scandals of recent years. So flagrantly unfair were the terms of the ordinance and so patent the intentions of its backers that the press of the city, with but few exceptions, united in condemning its nefarious provisions and its equally nefarious surroundings. So keen and direct was the criticism that the local administration, through its director of public safety, in charge of the police of the city, resorted to blackmail. Mr. John Wanamaker, whose son owns the *North American*, one of the most vigorous of critics, was visited by the official in question and threatened that if he did not cause that paper to stop its comments he would publish certain affidavits of a derogatory character which he had been gathering for six months.

That an influential official should use the enormous powers reposed in him by the laws of the state to seek out and destroy those who had the courage to point out and criticise the shortcomings of the administration filled the community with horror. A great mass meeting was held in the Academy of Music under the auspices of the Philadelphia Municipal League to protest against official blackmail and the gross abuse of official power. Not for many years has so great a mass meeting been held in the city. Never have the people been so outraged. While there does not appear at this time as if any legal action can be taken to punish the offenders, it looks as if the people would

apply the best and most drastic of remedies—the defeat of the administration's candidates when they offer themselves for the suffrages of the people.

The cry for municipal ownership in the abstract has often been made the cloak to hide some corrupt and selfish ends. By this I mean that very often a city administration has advocated the policy of public ownership while following out ulterior purposes of public plunder. This may be taken as an illustration of the popularity of the policy or of the difficulty of establishing more than a very few reforms at a time.

It is simply out of the question to mention the places where municipal ownership, control, and operation have been discussed or partly inaugurated. The list includes nearly every state and practically every city of importance. In many localities the successful operation of the water and gas supply by the municipality "can well be designated as the most notable municipal event of the year." For instance, Duluth, Minn., feels a just pride in the success of its water and gas plants, which were acquired a few years ago after a long struggle, and then placed in the hands of a competent engineer who was to be subject to no political clique or influence. "Not the faintest inclination has been shown to use the department or myself," writes the manager, "for political purposes. And therein lies the secret of our success." Rates have been reduced, the service has been made pleasant and agreeable to consumers, special privileges have been abolished, interest on the investment has been paid, and a surplus accumulated. If this can be done in Duluth, if honesty, economy, and intelligence can be introduced there, why is it not equally feasible to do the same elsewhere? It is, and if a story of honest business conduct of everyday affairs could secure readers, a long one could be made out; but people much prefer to hear a tale of shortcoming, and consequently we hear of more of the failures of municipal control and operation than we do of the successes. Naturally we conclude that the former are the rule; the latter the exceptions. We might as well conclude that vice and immorality are the rule because the average newspaper devotes more space to them than it does to

virtue and honesty. Yet we know from our own experience that the reverse is true.

The blind and selfish partisanship which gave to New York four years of Tammany rule and defeated Seth Low gave to New York city in its comptroller one of the most vigorous and promising figures in municipal life today, and likewise made possible the election of a governor a year later who has through his initiative and splendid leadership placed many wholesome laws upon the statute book. Pittsburg reformers, after several years of futile effort and discouraging-defeats, have taken fresh courage and a new view of the situation. Their coöperation in the ballot-reform movement bids fair to open up new avenues of usefulness. We must not forget that a desire for municipal right-doing is of slow growth. A hastily expressed wish is as quickly suppressed.

Cincinnati a year ago rebuked its ring by defeating its candidates, but the instruments used proved inadequate to the task imposed upon them. There was a brief resentment felt, but not a deep-seated desire for reform; consequently there was little, if any, discrimination in the selection of candidates, and the usual results followed. What an old, old story! Disgust at long-continued debauchery; a sudden determination to change matters; support of the first set of men who will promise relief; their election; the subsidence of public interest and a reversion to former practices by officials and to civic indifference by the citizens. Too often the people content themselves with a mere exhibition of their power, not caring to direct that power to definite ends. Such exhibitions amount to but little in the long run.

The principal work of the Milwaukee League, now known as the Municipal Association, during the past year has been its opposition to the street-railway company in its efforts to secure undue advantages from the city for a grossly inadequate consideration. In this it also opposed a city government originally elected expressly to protect the city against the road's encroachment. An ordinance was introduced in the interest of the road granting a ten-years' extension of franchises, otherwise terminating in 1924, and twelve new franchises extending to 1924 and of

great aggregate value. For this it promised to give the people a fare, including one transfer, that shall not exceed 5 cents, with six tickets for 25 cents, or twenty-five for \$1, good between 5:30 to 8 A. M. and 5 to 7 P. M. until January 1, 1905, when the same fare was to be extended over the entire day.

In view of these conditions the league held the first public meeting of indignation and protest when such a course required a good deal of courage. It condemned the ordinance with unsparing vigor, but scrupulously avoided personalities. As a result a large and representative committee was appointed to oppose the ordinance before the common council, and this was the beginning of a long and bitter contest between the people of all classes and the street railway and city government. Indignation meetings were held in all parts of the city, two of them called by the league, and the upheaval will not soon be forgotten. Unfortunately the meetings were not always conducted as exclusively upon the merits of the case as the initial meeting had been, and it is believed in some quarters that this may have been conducive to an unfavorable result—the passage of the ordinance in the face of injunction proceedings and general adverse popular opinion. Litigation growing out of the controversy is still pending in the Wisconsin supreme court. The position of the league was that the ordinance was a serious infringement of the interests of the city, and the duty of the city government was to continue the existing conditions until such time as the road should make a more equitable condition.

Chicago has taken a sensible course in regard to its railway franchises; its board of aldermen having appointed a Street Railway Commission, with a competent secretary, to consider the subject in a thorough and systematic manner against the time when the extension ordinances must come up for consideration. The feature of the situation in Chicago which deserves emphasis is the breakdown of the nonpartisan organization of the council, as the result of partisan activity. There has been a wonderful improvement in the Chicago city council within the last few years—due very largely to the work along independent lines of the Municipal Voters' League and similar bodies. The



voters were educated up to the point where they would vote for the best men for city offices regardless of national party affiliation. This work was consummated by requiring from the aldermen running with the league's indorsement a pledge to organize this council on nonpartisan lines. A year ago the council was so organized. Last spring the pledge as to nonpartisanship was made stronger than ever. Before the election there was some talk of organizing on partisan lines ; but the league and the independent newspapers at once challenged this talk, with the result that the idea of partisan organization apparently was abandoned, and the league's pledge was signed by all the aldermanic candidates who had the league's indorsement. After the election the majority met in caucus as partisans and finally put through the committee slate approved by the caucus. The personnel of the council is good, and of the committees fairly good. The fact, however, that the council was organized by a party caucus, in violation of the pledges made by a majority of the caucus to organize on nonpartisan lines, gave rise to much criticism and is regarded as discouraging. It is taken to mean the reintroduction of partisanship into aldermanic elections, and next spring voters no doubt will be urged to adhere to party lines on the ground that the men elected are likely to act as Republicans or Democrats, as the case may be, when in office.

The Municipal Voters' League, in a report dealing with the subject, has called attention to the difficulty of securing and holding a good council under the partisan system of nomination and election. It points out that the candidates offered by the party organization are frequently weak or colorless where they are not openly bad. In short, the partisan system does not operate to bring to the front the strongest men. Under the partisan system of nomination and the partisan ballot there is a limit to the betterment of conditions. Improvement can go only so far and it must halt. It is the opinion of leading officers of the Municipal Voters' League that the best results in city affairs can only be attained when the nonpartisan ballot shall have been substituted for the partisan ballot. Probably the next legislature of Illinois will be asked to provide for such a ballot

in city elections. Chicago's experience amply reinforces the contention of advocates for a nonpartisan ballot, as outlined in the "Municipal Program." Partisanship must be eliminated from our laws, even if we cannot altogether eliminate it from our political considerations.

So much has been said concerning the hopeful tendencies and the various setbacks of the past year that but little space is left for a recital of the victories of the year. Some have already been incidentally referred to in other connections; of the remainder a few will be touched upon simply by way of illustration and to encourage those who are striving to bring about a better condition of affairs.

In June last Portland, Ore., held a most interesting election. Oregon cast a large Republican vote. Indeed, the sentiment in this direction was reported to be greater than ever before. Yet, in face of this, Portland elected nearly its entire citizens' ticket, on the platform "Hands off city affairs." All the independent state senators and at least ten of the twelve representatives were chosen, notwithstanding the strength of the Republican organization and the running of the political tide in its favor. So vigorously has the sentiment grown that the county and city offices are matter of business and not of politics, and should be freed from constant legislative trickery, that the people have served notice that there must be an end to machine interference. The significance of the victory lies in that the candidates who were not interested in local affairs received a tremendous Republican majority, while politicians whom the people knew were interested adversely to them, or who had worked for the political control of city departments, were soundly beaten.

The election of Washington Gladden as an alderman in Columbus, O., is an event of national significance. That so competent and so well-informed a man could be elected speaks much for the district he represents and for his influence in it. That one so busy should accept the onerous burdens attached to aldermanic duties is an example the force of which should not be lost upon those men who advocate good government, but refuse to make sacrifices for it. As a leading paper in commenting on

his acceptance said: "If Dr. Gladden can find time to go into the council, there is no excuse that will suffice to release any man."

The election of Professor Samuel E. Sparling, of the University of Wisconsin, to the Madison board of aldermen, and that of Rev. Norman Fox, D.D., to be mayor of Morristown, N. J., teach the same lessons. When voters will elect such men to office, and when such men will accept office, the solution of the municipal problem is not a hopeless one.

The Philadelphia Municipal League won a notable victory in February by electing four of its magisterial candidates over those chosen by the machine. In Rochester the Good Government Club has secured and held a position as a balance of power, to the manifest advantage of the city's best interest. Troy, N. Y., has witnessed the overthrow of the ring's candidates in face of twenty-five years' control. Comptroller Coler has increased his hold upon the confidence of his constituents, and has proved a thorn in the side of those whose interests were inimical to the city's. Boston defeated by a decisive vote an attempt of the street-railway company to reimpose surface tracks on Tremont street, after the expenditure of millions in the construction of the subway. The good-government organizations of Detroit and Cleveland have successfully continued their much-needed work of discrimination between candidates.

There are many other points which of right should be touched upon in this report, but the year's development has been so extended and varied, the movement has grown so vigorously, and the agencies for betterment multiplied so rapidly, that it is simply out of the question to touch more than a few phases, and those but generally. This, however, we must all agree, affords ground for encouragement and reasonable hope, and amply justifies the continuation and extension of the work for which organizations like the National Municipal League stand.

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